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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH				760b.00/3-1053 XR 760b.11 XR 760b.13	
FROM :	AMEMBASSY, STOCKHOLM		839		
TO :	THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.				March 10, 1953 DATE
REF :	Embdes 722, February 11, 1953				760b.00/3-1053
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SUBJECT: Estonian Exile Activities

As forecast in the referenced despatch, a meeting of an "Estonian Constitutional Electoral Board" was held in Detmold, Germany, and Mr. Alfred MAURER was named Deputy President of Estonia in Exile. This is the second claimant now on the exile scene for the position of Acting President of Estonia, the first being August REI.

The background of the naming of Mr. Maurer as Deputy (and consequently Acting) President of Estonia lies in the dislike felt by a number of exiled Estonians for August Rei and for some of his liberal-socialist supporters. This opposition, which probably includes the majority of exiled Estonians, contends that Mr. Rei's claim to be Acting President of Estonia is not justified by the Estonian Constitution. It contends that Article 46 of this Constitution requires the election of an Acting President by the Constitutional Electoral Board, if the office of President becomes "vacant in time of war". Mr. Rei's supporters argue on the other hand that Estonia never entered a state of war, so that there is no need to convene the Electoral Board with the further result that Mr. Rei becomes Acting President through normal succession as the oldest surviving Cabinet member of the last free government.

The Electoral Board called for by Article 46 of the Constitution consists of the Prime Minister, the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, the Chairman of the Chamber of Deputies, the Chairman of the Council of State and the President of the Supreme Court of Justice. These positions were represented at the Detmold meeting as follows:

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A. Prime Minister

IN view of Rei's refusal to convene the Electoral Board, the ex-Minister of Defense, Johan HOLMBERG, the next senior remaining Cabinet member, assumed responsibility for convening the Board and acted in this capacity during its meeting.

B. The Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces

This position was assumed by General Johannes SOODLA in view of the deportation in 1941 of Commander-in-Chief General LAIDONER and Mr. Johan Holmberg's taking the functions of Prime Minister at the meeting.

C. Chairman of the Chamber of Deputies

Represented by Mr. Maurer, former Deputy Speaker of the Estonian Chamber of Deputies.

D. Chairman of the Council of State

This post was not and reportedly cannot be filled.

E. President of the Supreme Court of Justice

Timotheus CRUNTHAL, senior surviving Judge of the Estonian Supreme Court.

The only action taken by the Electoral Board at the meeting was to name Mr. Maurer as the Deputy President of Estonia in Exile and consequently its Acting President.

It is anticipated that Mr. Maurer will nominate an Estonian Cabinet in Exile and will make an effort to include in this Cabinet an Estonian in each of the major centers of Estonian refugees, including the United States, Canada, Germany, England and Sweden. It is also understood that he will lead an effort to hold an election among all Estonians in Sweden in order to form a foundation for participation in an international Estonian center probably to be located in the United States. The Rei faction of Estonian exiles has refused to recognize Mr. Maurer as Acting President of Estonia and there are consequently two claimants for this title.

For the Ambassador:

Marshall Green

Marshall Green
First Secretary of Embassy

Copies to:
Bonn and Oslo

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